

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 SSC-01 NSCE-00 USIE-00
INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07 L-03
NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 TRSE-00 AID-05
PC-01 /057 W

-----088731 062249Z /75

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FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5516

INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION

AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

AMEMBASSY CARACAS

AMEMBASSY GEORGETOWN

AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

AMEMBASSY LIMA

AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO

AMEMBASSY PARAMARIBO

AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL SAO PAULO IMMEDIATE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 BRASILIA 0155

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, BR

SUBJ: GEISEL ANNOUNCES FIGUEIREDO TO BE HIS SUCCESSOR

REF: BRASILIA 0088

1. SUMMARY: AS ANTICIPATED REFTEL, PRESIDENT GEISEL JANUARY 5
INDICATED TO ARENA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HIS CHOICES FOR PARTY'S
CANDIDATES FOR PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENT TO BE
NOMINATED AT PARTY'S NATIONAL CONVENTION IN SEPTEMBER: FOR
PRESIDENT--60-YEAR-OLD SNI CHIEF GENERAL JOAO BAPTISTA DE OLIVEIRA
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E FIGUEIREDO; FOR VICE-PRESIDENT--ANTONIO AURELIANO CHAVES,
49-YEAR-OLD CIVILIAN GOVERNOR OF STATE OF MINAS GERAIS SINCE 1974.
IN A BRIEF ADDRESS, GEISEL SAID HE WAS SATISFIED THAT TEAM NOT
ONLY ADHERED TO PRINCIPLES THAT GUIDE BRAZIL TOWARD ITS GREATER
DEVELOPMENT BUT THAT IT WOULD CARRY FORWARD THE PROCESS OF
INSTITUTIONALIZATION, INCLUDING ELIMINATION OF LAWS OF EXCEPTION.
SENATE PRESIDENT PETRONIO PORTELLA WAS LATER CHARGED WITH TELLING

SENATOR MAGALHAES PINTO THAT LATTER'S NAME HAD NOT ENTERED INTO THE PRESIDENT'S CONSIDERATION OF POTENTIAL PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES. MAGALHAES PINTO INDICATED HE WOULD CONTINUE HIS PERSONAL CAMPAIGN. END SUMMARY:

2. IN PRESENTING THEIR NAMES TO EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE GEISEL, IN A BRIEF ADDRESS MARKED BY USE OF FIRST PERSON PRONOUNS, SAID HE HAD DECIDED ON TICKET AS "MOST ADEQUATE SOLUTION TO PROBLEM OF PRESIDENTIAL SUCCESSION" AFTER LENGTHY CONSIDERATION WHICH INCLUDED "LISTENING TO OTHERS, OFTEN DISCUSSING (MATTER) IMPERSONALLY, HAVING IN MIND WHAT BRAZIL IS, WHAT BRAZIL IS GOING TO BE, AND THE STAGE IT WILL BE GOING THROUGH IN COMING YEARS." AFTER PRAISING FIGUEIREDO AND CHAVES FOR THEIR PAST ACHIEVEMENTS, GEISEL SAID BOTH "ADHERE SQUARELY TO THE PRINCIPLES THAT GUIDE US ... TOWARD THE GREATER DEVELOPMENT OF BRAZIL SO THAT OUR POTENTIAL MAY BECOME POWER. POWER THAT WE INTEND TO, AND MUST, USE FOR THE BENEFIT OF OUR PEOPLE, FOR THE IMPROVEMENT OF THEIR GENERAL CONDITIONS, SO AS TO ASSURE THEM THE WELL-BEING WE ALL STRIVE FOR. BUT IT IS IMPORTANT NOT ONLY TO DEVELOP THE COUNTRY, BUT ALSO TO GUARANTEE THE BASIC CONDITIONS FOR THAT DEVELOPMENT, OF WHICH I CONSIDER ORDER, IN FIRST PLACE, AS THE MOST IMPORTANT CONDITION. BRAZIL NEEDS ORDER, NEEDS TRANQUILITY, NEEDS INTERNAL PEACE SO THAT WE CAN REALLY GET TO WORK." FINALLY, GEISEL CONCLUDED, IN MAKING HIS CHOICES HE WANTED TO FIND "SOMEONE WHO WAS CAPABLE, BECAUSE OF HIS INTELLIGENCE, OF HIS PAST RECORD, OF HIS WAY OF THINKING, TO GIVE LIFE TO THAT WHICH I STATED IN MY DECEMBER 1 SPEECH" (IN WHICH LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PRESIDENT PLEDGED HIMSELF TO LIMITED POLITICAL CHANGE BY THE END OF HIS TERM--BRASILIA 9900 NOTAL). "SOMEONE", GEISEL CONTINUED, "CAPABLE--WITHIN OUR REVOLUTIONARY CONTEXT--OF CARRYING FORWARD THE PROCESS OF INSTITUTIONALIZATION; OF ELIMINATING THE LAWS OF EXCEPTION; OF GIVING THE COUNTRY CERTAIN SAFEGUARDS WHICH WILL PERMIT IT TO GO FORWARD PEACEFULLY AND, IN THIS WAY, TO MAKE OUR DEMOCRACY BECOME INCREASINGLY BETTER, NOT ONLY ON PAPER BUT IN REAL LIFE."

3. AS TO TIMING OF HIS ANNOUNCEMENT, GEISEL NOTED THAT THE SELECTION OF A HOST OF CANDIDATES FOR GUBERNATORIAL, CONGRESSIONAL AND STATE ASSEMBLY SLOTS DEPEND "LIKE IT OR NOT" ON THE CHOICE OF PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE, AND THAT DELAY ON THE LATTER WOULD PREJUDICE THE FORMER.

4. FIGUEIREDO WILL BE INFORMED OFFICIALLY OF HIS DESIGNATION THIS AFTERNOON BY ARENA'S EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE, WHICH WILL VISIT HIM IN HIS OFFICE.

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FM AMEMBASSY BRASILIA

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5. AS DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, FIGUEIREDO HAS LONG BEEN KNOWN WITHIN THE MILITARY BUT IS LARGELY AN UNCERTAIN QUANTITY OUTSIDE. NOT MUCH IS KNOWN OF HIS POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL THINKING. IN FACT, ARENA PRESIDENT FRANCELINO PEREIRA ACKNOWLEDGED TO REPORTERS YESTERDAY THAT HE WAS NOT FAMILIAR WITH FIGUEIREDO'S "PLATFORM." THIS WILL, OF COURSE, BE THE SUBJECT OF NUMROUS FUTURE MESSAGES.

6. CHAVES, WHOSE SELECTION HAD BEEN FORESHADOWED ALTHOUGH NOT FORECAST IN EMBASSY AND DAO REPORTING (E.G., BRASILIA 9585, PARA 19), IS A PERSONABLE, ARTICULATE, WELL-REGARDED POLITICIAN OF LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MODERATE VIEWS. PERSONALLY CLOSE TO GEISEL, WHO TOOK HIM OUT OF THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES IN 1974 TO MAKE HIM GOVERNOR OF MINAS

GERAIS, CHAVES HAS BEEN AN ADVOCATE OF POLITICAL LIBERALIZATION AND ONE OF THE MOST EFFECTIVE OF THE CURRENT CROP OF STATE GOVERNORS. HIS ROLE IN FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS WILL BE WATCHED WITH INTEREST, NOTWITHSTANDING GENERAL ACCEPTANCE OF THE FACT THAT BRAZILIAN VICE-PRESIDENTS (TO SAY NOTHING OF VICE-PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATES) HAVE HAD LITTLE OR NO VOICE IN THE NATION'S AFFAIRS SINCE THE 1964 REVOLUTION. CHAVES IN FACT TOLD PRESS YESTERDAY HE DID NOT KNOW WHAT HIS ROLE WOULD BE.

7. SENATE PRESIDENT PETRONIO PORTELLA WAS CHARGED TO INFORM SENATOR MAGALHAES PINTO ON GEISEL'S BEHALF THAT HIS NAME HAD NOT ENTERED INTO THE PRESIDENT'S CONSIDERATION AS HIS SUCCESSOR. MAGALHAES PINTO THANKED PORTELLA AND THE PRESIDENT FOR THEIR COURTESY AND INDICATED THAT HE WOULD CONTINUE HIS PERSONAL CAMPAIGN FOR THE NOMINATION AT ARENA'S CONVENTION IN SEPTEMBER. JOHNSON

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